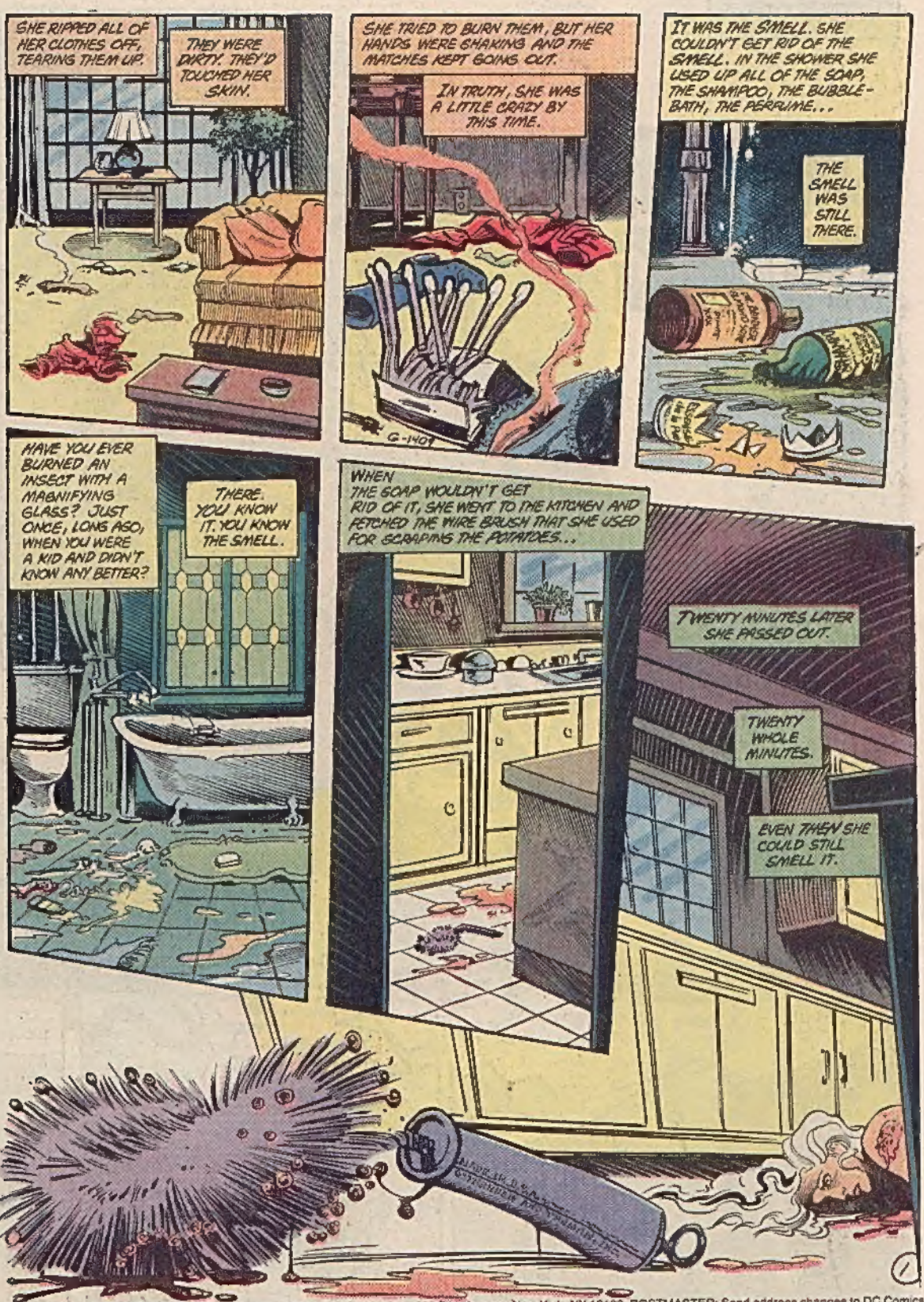
DC
The SAGA of The
SWAMP THING
29
75¢
CAN. 95¢
U.K. 30p
OCT. 84
THE NEW
DC
THERE'S NO STOPPING US NOW.
BY
ALAN MOORE,
STEPHEN BISSETTE
AND JOHN TOTLEBEN


SHE RIPPED ALL OF HER CLOTHES OFF, TEARING THEM UP.
THEY WERE DIRTY. THEY'D TOUCHED HER SKIN.
SHE TRIED TO BURN THEM, BUT HER HANDS WERE SHAKING AND THE MATCHES KEPT GOING OUT.
IN TRUTH, SHE WAS A LITTLE CRAZY BY THIS TIME.
G-140?
IT WAS THE SMELL. SHE COULDN'T GET RID OF THE SMELL. IN THE SHOWER SHE USED UP ALL OF THE SOAP, THE SHAMPOO, THE BUBBLE-BATH, THE PERFUME...
THE SMELL WAS STILL THERE.
HAVE YOU EVER BURNED AN INSECT WITH A MAGNIFYING GLASS? JUST ONCE, LONG AGO, WHEN YOU WERE A KID AND DIDN'T KNOW ANY BETTER?
THERE. YOU KNOW IT. YOU KNOW THE SMELL.
WHEN THE SOAP WOULDN'T GET RID OF IT, SHE WENT TO THE KITCHEN AND FETCHED THE WIRE BRUSH THAT SHE USED FOR SCRAPING THE POTATOES...
TWENTY MINUTES LATER SHE PASSED OUT.
TWENTY WHOLE MINUTES.
EVEN THEN SHE COULD STILL SMELL IT.

THE SAGA OF SWAMP THING 29 Published monthly by DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to DC Comics Inc., Subscription Dept., PO Box 1308-F, Fort Lee, NJ 07024. Annual subscription rate $9.00. Outside USA $10.00. Copyright © 1984 DC Comics Inc. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. Printed in USA. Advertising Representative: Sanford Schwarz & Co., 355 Lexington Avenue, New York, NY 10017. (212) 391-1400.
DC Comics Inc. A Warner Communications Company

SHE COULD SMELL IT IN HER DREAMS.

SWAMP THING

CREATED BY LEN WEIN AND BERNI WRIGHTSON

LOVE AND DEATH

ALAN MOORE
WRITER

STEPHEN BISSETTE AND JOHN TOTLEBEN
ARTISTS

KAREN BERGER
EDITOR

TATJANA WOOD
COLORIST

JOHN COSTANZA
LETTERER

THE DREAM HAD STARTED OUT SO NICELY...

SHE WAS OUT IN THE SWAMP AND HE WAS THERE AND THEY WERE FRIENDS AGAIN...

HELLO.

HELLO...ABBY.

IT...HAS BEEN... A LONG TIME.

I MISSED YOU.

I THOUGHT...

WELL, YOU KNOW, AFTER THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU...

I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T LIKE ME ANYMORE.

I'M SORRY... I KNOW I MADE YOU MAD, I KEPT CALLING YOU ALEC, AND I KNOW THAT YOU'RE NOT ALEC, BUT...

I CAN'T GET USED TO CALLING YOU ANYTHING ELSE. I'M SORRY, I'M AN IDIOT, I KNOW, BUT...

ABBY...

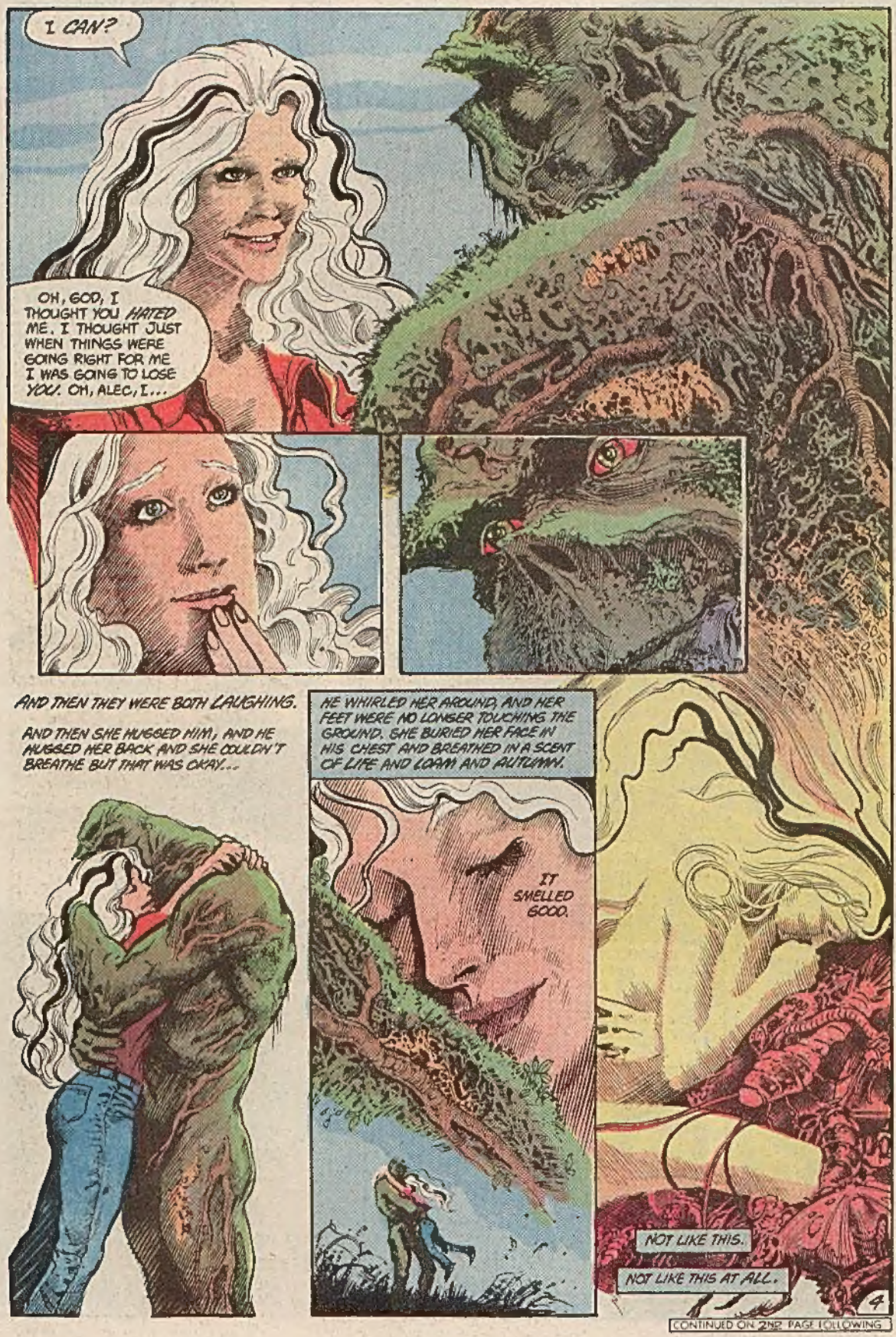
IT DOESN'T MATTER.

NOT ANY MORE.

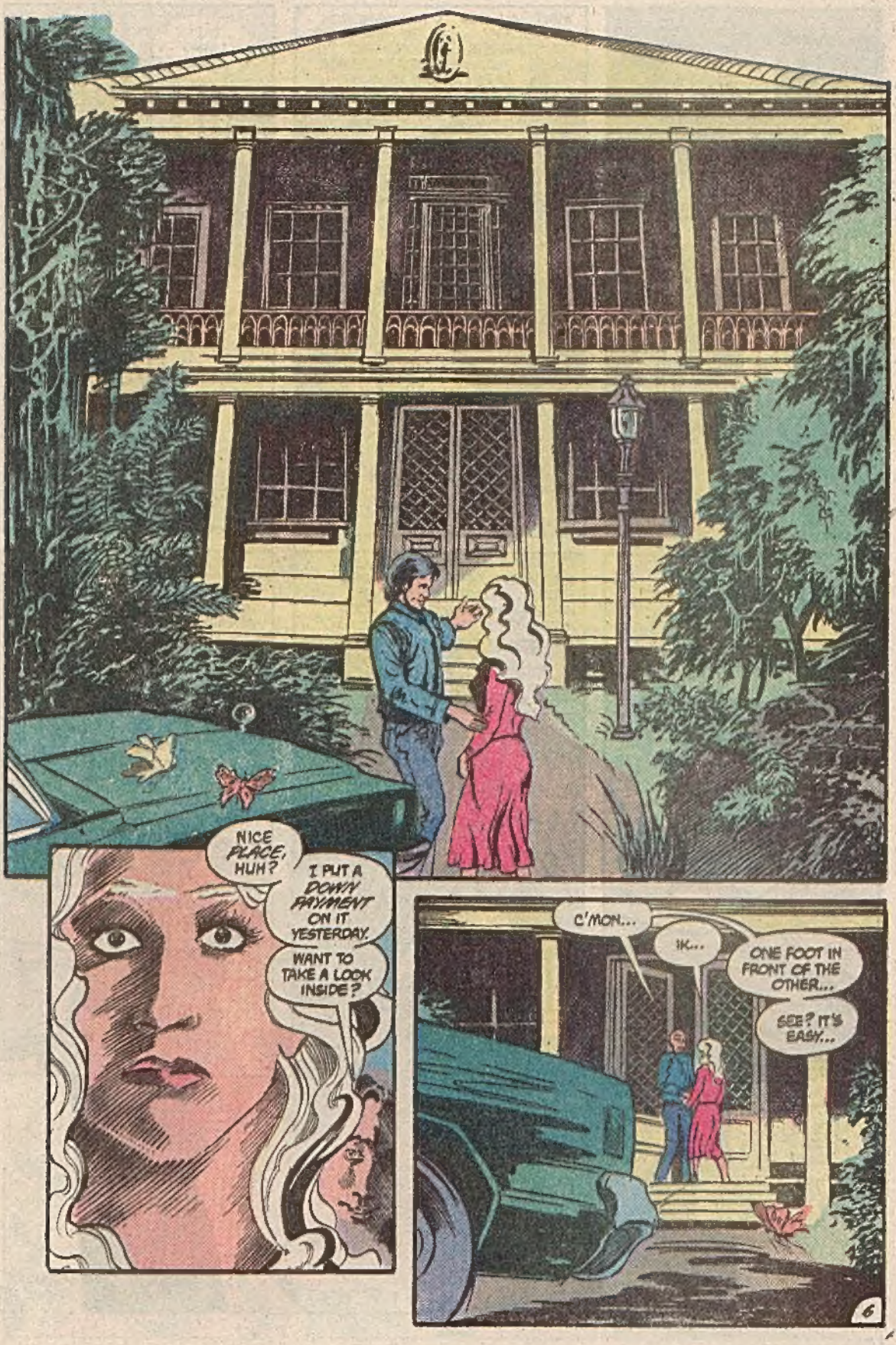
YOU CAN CALL ME ALEC...IF IT'S EASIER...

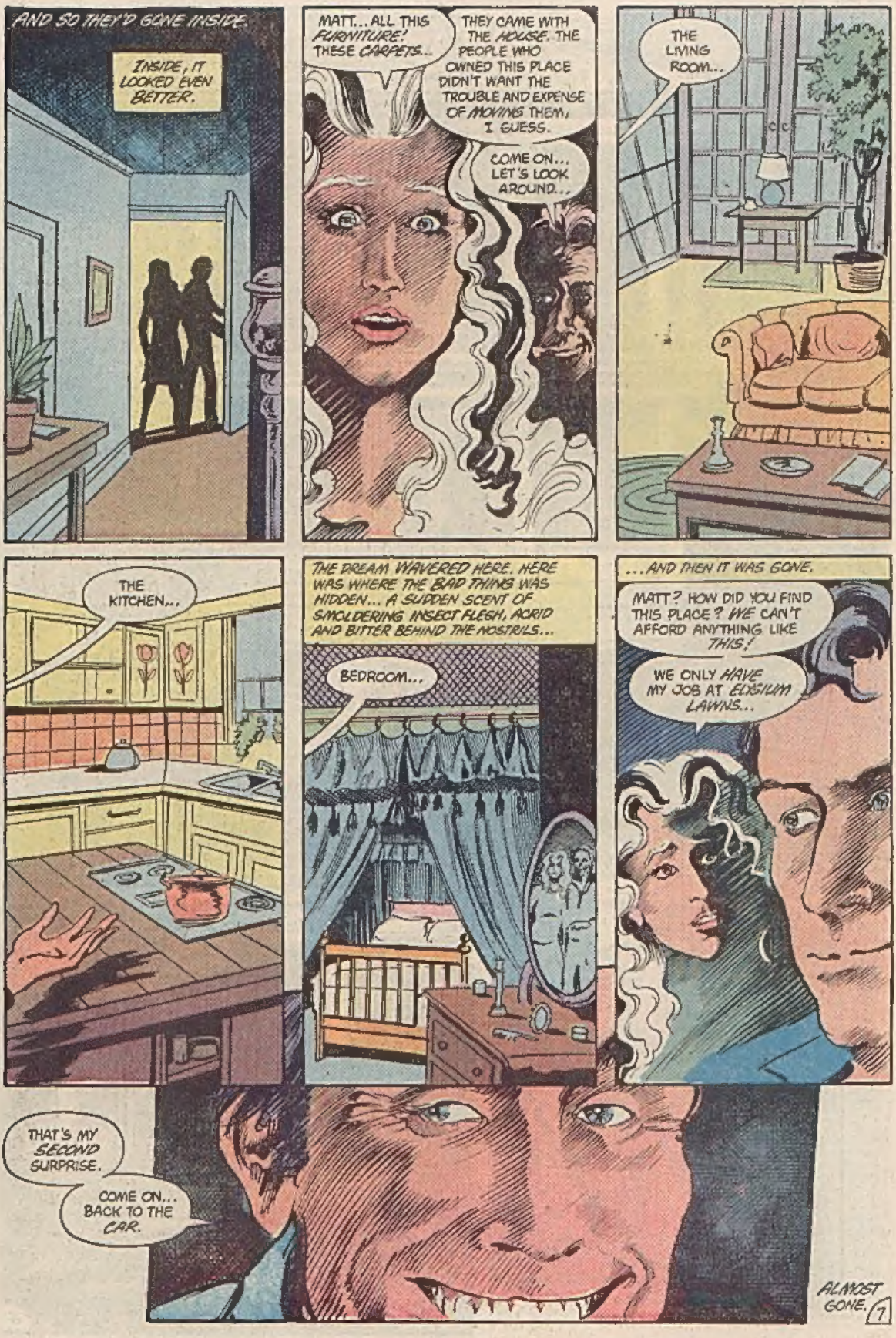
2

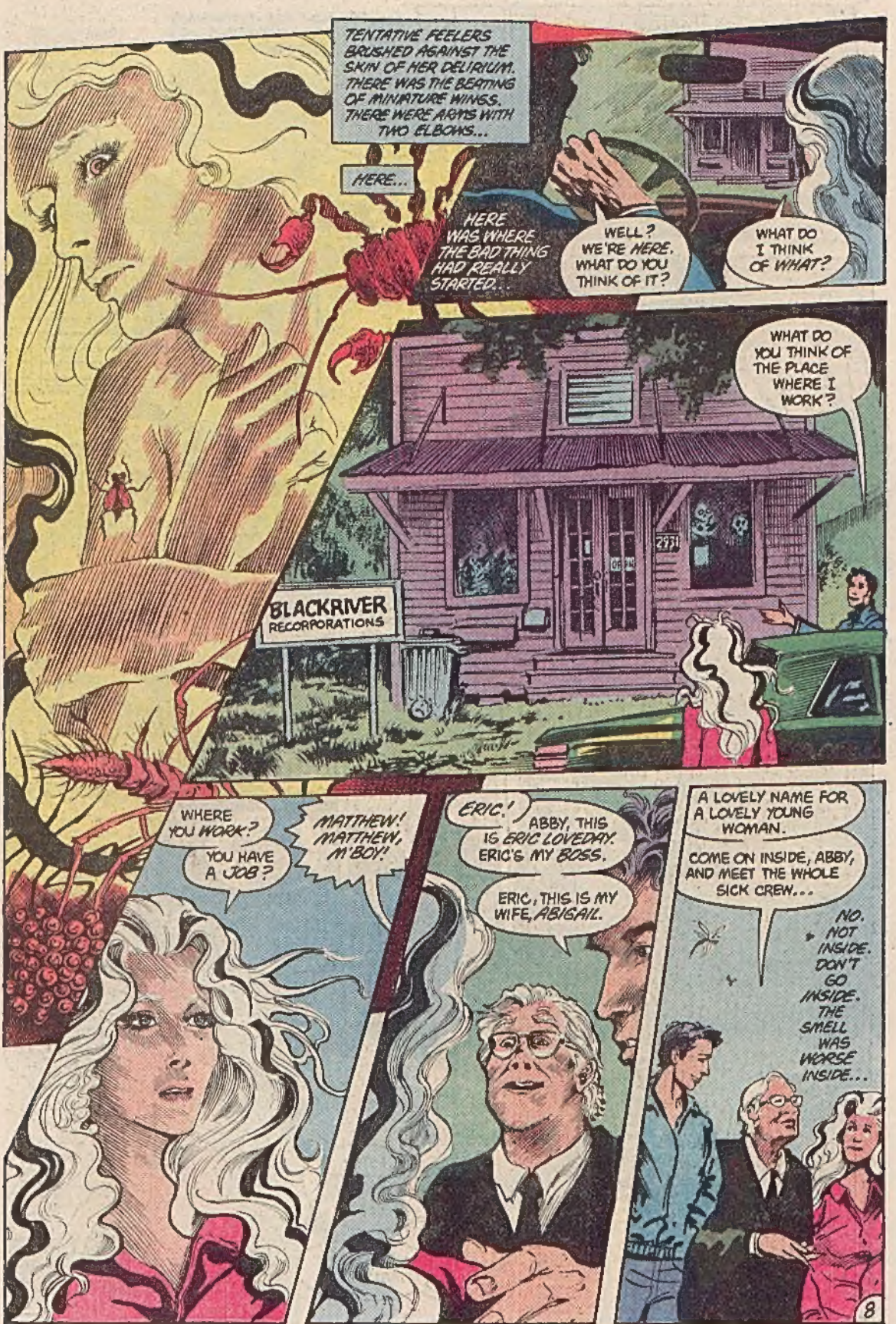
3


I CAN?
OH, GOD, I THOUGHT YOU HATED ME. I THOUGHT JUST WHEN THINGS WERE GOING RIGHT FOR ME I WAS GOING TO LOSE YOU. OH, ALEC, I...
AND THEN THEY WERE BOTH LAUGHING.
AND THEN SHE HUGGED HIM, AND HE HUGGED HER BACK AND SHE COULDN'T BREATHE BUT THAT WAS OKAY...
HE WHIRLED HER AROUND, AND HER FEET WERE NO LONGER TOUCHING THE GROUND. SHE BURIED HER FACE IN HIS CHEST AND BREATHED IN A SCENT OF LIFE AND LOAM AND AUTUMN.
IT SMELLED GOOD.
NOT LIKE THIS.
NOT LIKE THIS AT ALL.
4
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

THE DREAM TWISTED THEN, FOLDING IN UPON ITSELF AND BLOSSOMING INTO NEW SHAPES.
THE LIGHT CHANGED, AS IF A CLOUD OF BLOWFLIES HAD SUDDENLY OBSCURED THE SUN...
...AND SHE WAS WITH HER HUSBAND, AND HE SAID HE HAD THREE SURPRISES FOR HER.
OH, MATT, COME ON! WHAT?
GUESS.
YOU'VE DISCOVERED YOU'RE HEIR TO THE THRONE OF DUBROVNIA?
NOPE.
YOU'VE JOINED THE MOONIES.
UH-UH.
YOU'RE REALLY ALAN FUNT AND FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS I'VE BEEN ON CANDID CAMERA.
CLOSE, BUT NO CIGAR.
I WANT A DIVORCE.
FAIR ENOUGH. BUT YOU'LL BE SO-REE.
MATT, IF YOU DON'T TELL ME WHAT THIS SURPRISE IS, YOU'LL BE CHAIRBOUND!
OH, OKAY, IF YOU'RE GOING TO GET VIOLENT...
YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE SURPRISE IS?
WELL, WE'RE RIGHT NOW PARKED OUTSIDE OF IT.
WE'RE...?
5


NICE PLACE, HUH?
I PUT A DOWN PAYMENT ON IT YESTERDAY.
WANT TO TAKE A LOOK INSIDE?
C'MON...
IK...
ONE FOOT IN FRONT OF THE OTHER...
SEE? IT'S EASY...
6


AND SO THEY'D GONE INSIDE.
INSIDE, IT LOOKED EVEN BETTER.
MATT... ALL THIS FURNITURE! THESE CARPETS...
THEY CAME WITH THE HOUSE. THE PEOPLE WHO OWNED THIS PLACE DIDN'T WANT THE TROUBLE AND EXPENSE OF MOVING THEM, I GUESS.
COME ON... LET'S LOOK AROUND...
THE LIVING ROOM...
THE KITCHEN...
THE DREAM WAVERED HERE. HERE WAS WHERE THE BAD THING WAS HIDDEN... A SUDDEN SCENT OF SMOLDERING INSECT FLESH, ACRID AND BITTER BEHIND THE NOSTRILS...
BEDROOM...
...AND THEN IT WAS GONE.
MATT? HOW DID YOU FIND THIS PLACE? WE CAN'T AFFORD ANYTHING LIKE THIS!
WE ONLY HAVE MY JOB AT ELYSIUM LAWNS...
THAT'S MY SECOND SURPRISE.
COME ON... BACK TO THE CAR.
ALMOST GONE.


TENTATIVE FEELERS BRUSHED AGAINST THE SKIN OF HER DELIRIUM. THERE WAS THE BEATING OF MINIATURE WINGS. THERE WERE ARMS WITH TWO ELBOWS...
HERE...
HERE WAS WHERE THE BAD THING HAD REALLY STARTED...
WELL? WE'RE HERE. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT?
WHAT DO I THINK OF WHAT?
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE PLACE WHERE I WORK?
BLACKRIVER RECORPORATIONS
WHERE YOU WORK? YOU HAVE A JOB?
MATTHEW! MATTHEW, M'BOY!
ERIC.' ABBY, THIS IS ERIC LOVEDAY. ERIC'S MY BOSS.
ERIC, THIS IS MY WIFE, ABIGAIL.
A LOVELY NAME FOR A LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN.
COME ON INSIDE, ABBY, AND MEET THE WHOLE SICK CREW...
NO. NOT INSIDE. DON'T GO INSIDE. THE SMELL WAS WORSE INSIDE...

INSIDE, JUST FOR A MOMENT, SHE HAD SEEN WHERE THE SMELL WAS COMING FROM.
OFFICE
EVERYBODY'S THROUGH HERE, ABIGAIL.
YOU KNOW THE WAY YOUR HUBBY HERE GOT HIS JOB... HEH...
DIDJA TELL HER, MATTHEW?
I THOUGHT I'D LEAVE IT TO YOU, ERIC. YOU TELL IT BETTER.
MATTHEW HERE WAS DRIVING BY, ABOUT A WEEK BACK NOW. NOTICES THE PLACE FOR THE FIRST TIME, THINKS "HMM, GUESS I'LL TAKE A LOOK!"
HEH, THIS NEXT BIT IS FUNNY...
I WAS EXPECTING SOMEBODY FROM A JOB AGENCY, FILL A VACANCY WE HAD, RIGHT? SO, I SEE MATTHEW PULL UP, I STORM STRAIGHT ON OUT THERE...
"HEY! YOU! DO YOU REALIZE YOU'RE AN HOUR LATE?"
SO THEN MATTHEW HERE, HE SAYS...
EXCUSE ME A MOMENT, ERIC...
ABBY? ABBY, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
UH... FINE... I, UH, JUST SUCH A SURPRISE, I...
UH...
FETCH ABBY SOME COFFEE, ERIC.
RIGHT AWAY, MATTHEW...
9

THE COFFEE CAME, AND SHE DRANK IT, AND EVERYTHING WAS ORDINARY.

SHE MET GUS PRITCHETT, WHO HANDLED INVOICING, AND BETTY MONTCLAIR, WHO COULDN'T MOVE HER FACE BECAUSE OF A STROKE...

SHE MET SALLY PARKS, WHOSE NAME SOUNDED FAMILIAR, AND MARK NEWELL, A PRETTY OFFICE JUNIOR WHO BLUSHED WHEN HE SHOOK HER HAND..

...AND THEN SHE AND MATT WERE OUTSIDE AGAIN, WALKING BACK TO THE CAR.

SHE DIDN'T TELL HIM WHAT SHE'D SEEN WHEN ERIC LOVEDAY OPENED THE DOOR.

HE DIDN'T TELL HER WHAT "RECORPORATIONS" MEANT.

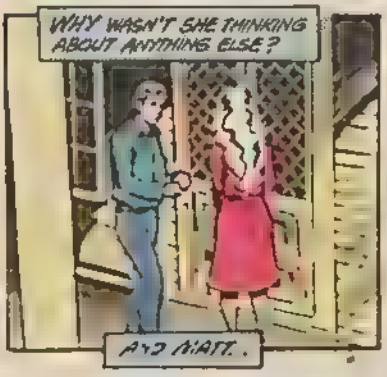
...AND HER ONLY QUESTION WAS THE ONE SHE SHOULD NEVER HAVE ASKED.

MATT...YOU SAID *THREE* SURPRISES.

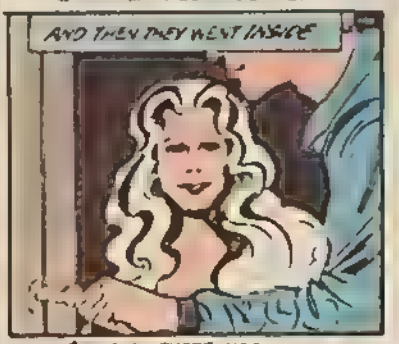
IT'LL PROBABLY MAKE ME GO DIZZY AGAIN, BUT WHAT'S THE *THIRD* SURPRISE?

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

IT WAS HER HOME AND SHE AND MATT OWNED IT AND IT WAS BEAUTIFUL.. SHE WASN'T THINKING ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE.



MATT HAD CHANGED SO MUCH. ALL THE WEAKNESS AND DESPAIR HAD GONE, LEAVING A NEW STRENGTH, AN UNFAMILIAR CONFIDENCE...



AND THEN THERE WAS...

AND THEN THERE WAS THE..

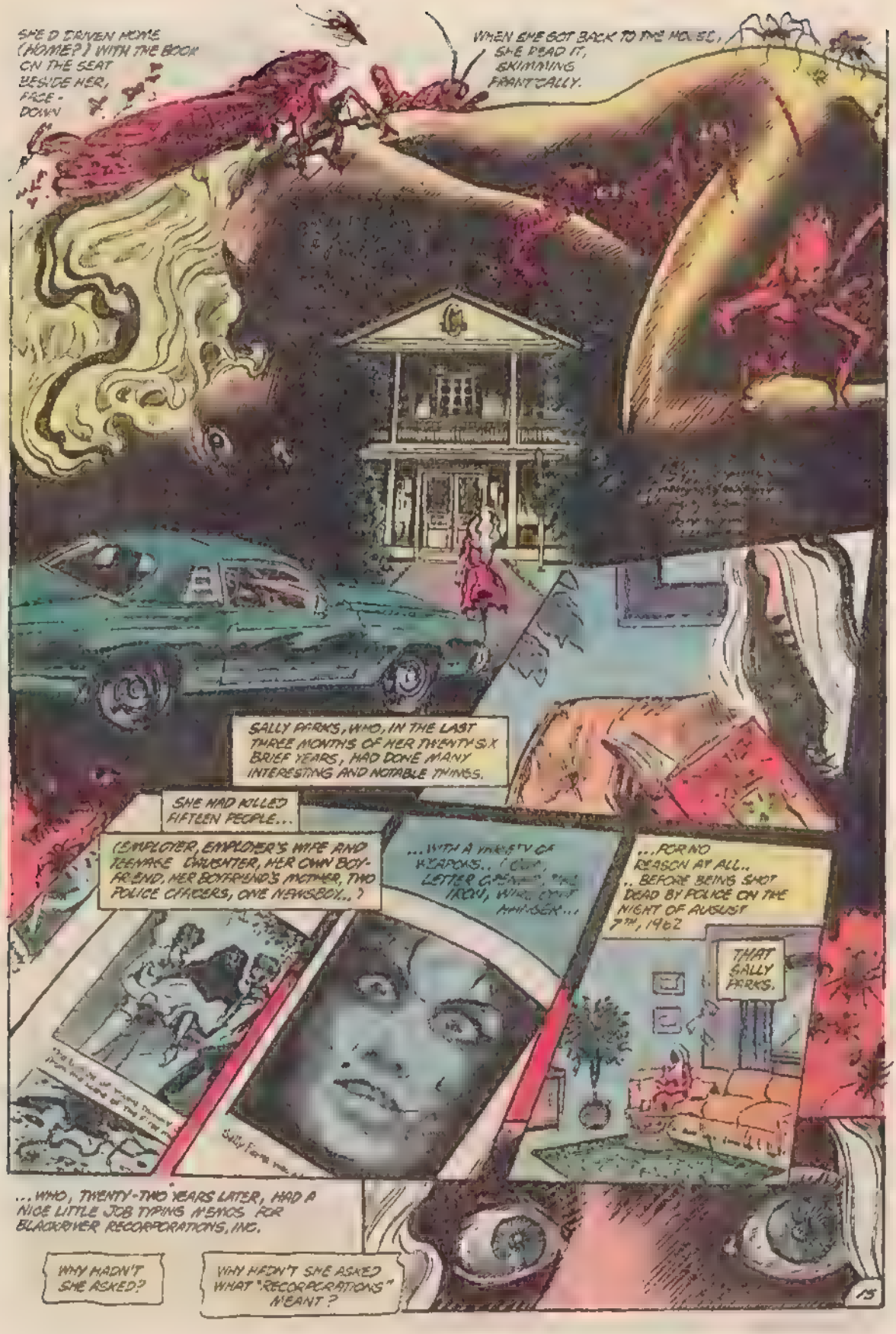
... THE BAD THING.

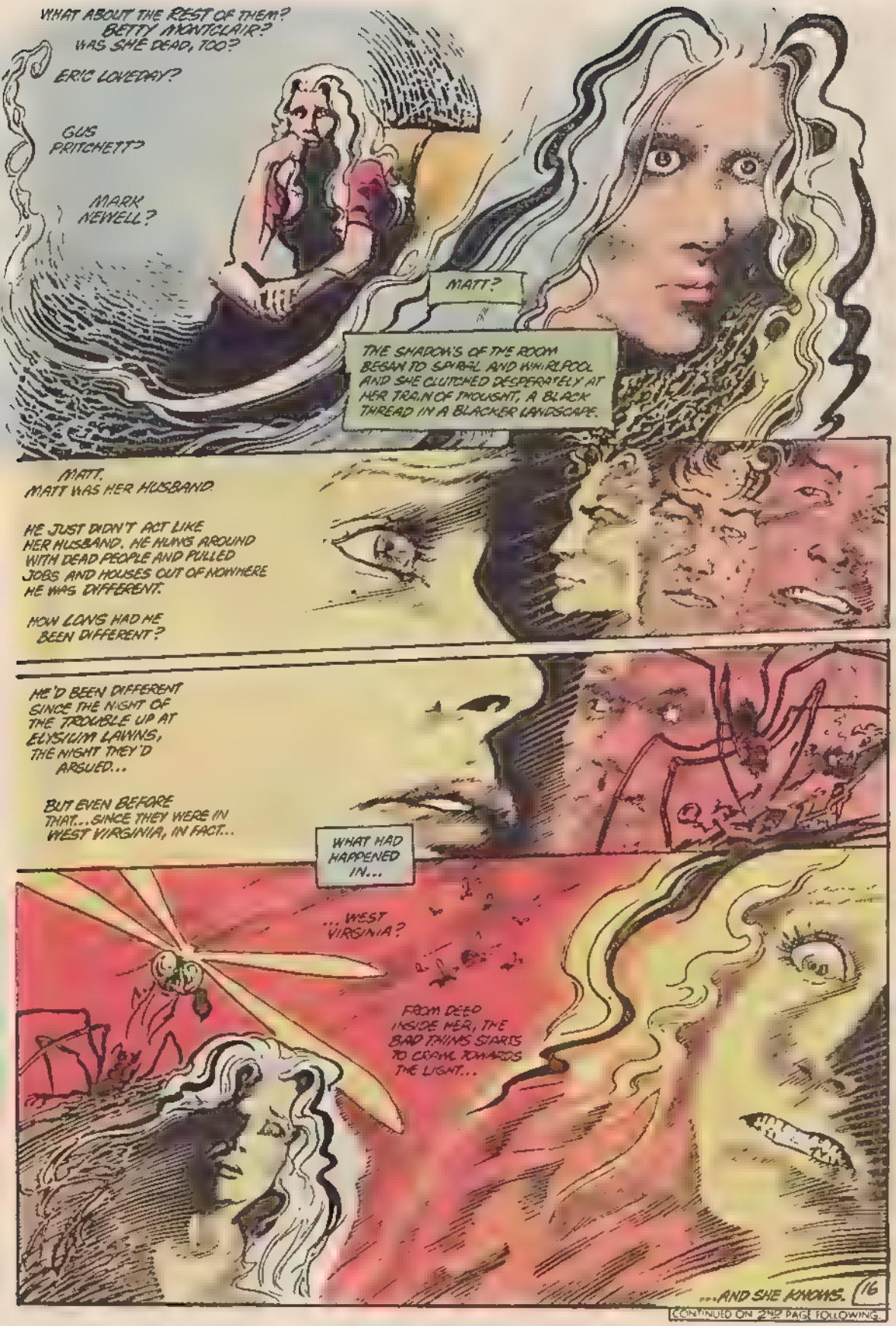
YES

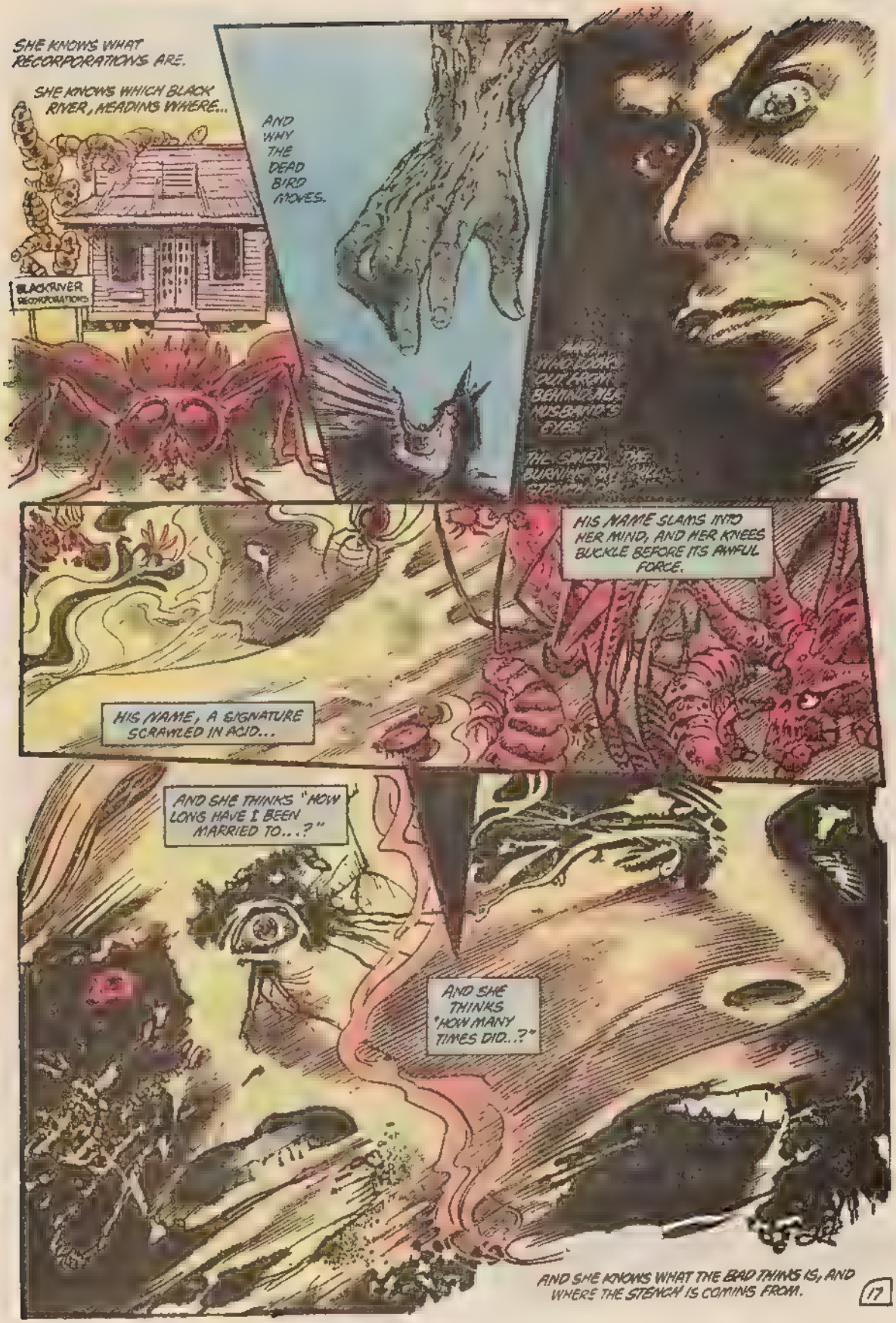
SHE DIDN'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT IT, BUT THERE WAS THAT BUG-TASTE IN THE BACK OF HER MOUTH, AND...
AND
SHE DUG HER HEELS INTO THE FLANKS OF HER NIGHTMARE AND MADE IT GO A DIFFERENT WAY...
AND THEN... JUST FOR A MOMENT... SUE WASN'T IN HER OWN DREAM ANYMORE.
SHE WAS IN SOMEONE ELSE'S DREAM.
HIS DREAM...
HE'D FOUND A BIRD, FALLEN IN BLACK GRASS THAT WAS SHARP ENOUGH TO CUT YOUR FINGER.
WRETCHED AND SMASHED, IT LAY LIKE A BLOODED SHUTTLECOCK. IT WAS DEAD.
BUT IT WAS MOVING
WHY WAS IT MOVING?
HIS HAND REACHED OUT TO TOUCH IT. ITS EYES REGARDED HIM, MILKY AND OBSCURE...
...THEN SOMEONE DROPPED A BRICK AND BLOCKED SUE INTO HER DREAM WORLD. SHE HEARD THE WORLD SHATTER LIKE GLASS. SHE HEARD...
... AND SMELL AND EVERYWHERE.
12

EVEN WHEN SHE'D GONE OVER TO THE LIBRARY IN HOUMA, WHERE NOTHING STRANGE EVER HAPPENED AND REALITY WAS ALPHABETICALLY FILED...
EVEN THERE.
TERREBONNE PARISH PUBLIC LIBRARY
NO PARKING ANY TIME
EXCUSE ME?
IS THERE A SECTION WHERE YOU KEEP YOUR PSYCHOLOGY BOOKS?
PSYCHOLOGY OR PSYCHIATRY?
UH... WELL, I DON'T KNOW... I'M WORKING WITH AUTISTIC KIDS AND I WAS LOOKING FOR...
PSYCHOLOGY. OVER IN THE FAR
RIGHT. THANKS.
THUK
OH SSHHHH!
13

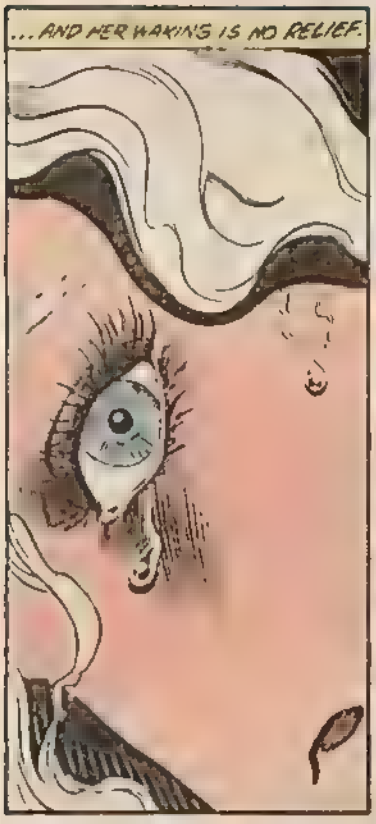
DR. NILES RICHY
TTT!


SHE'D DRIVEN HOME (HOME?) WITH THE BOOK ON THE SEAT BESIDE HER, FACE-DOWN
WHEN SHE GOT BACK TO THE HOUSE, SHE READ IT, SKIMMING FRANTICALLY.
SALLY PARKS, WHO, IN THE LAST THREE MONTHS OF HER TWENTY-SIX BRIEF YEARS, HAD DONE MANY INTERESTING AND NOTABLE THINGS.
SHE HAD KILLED FIFTEEN PEOPLE...
(EMPLOYER, EMPLOYER'S WIFE AND TEENAGE DAUGHTER, HER OWN BOYFRIEND, HER BOYFRIEND'S MOTHER, TWO POLICE OFFICERS, ONE NEWSBOY...)
...WITH A VARIETY OF WEAPONS... (GUN, LETTER OPENER, AXE, KNIFE, WIRE, CHEF'S KNIFE...)
...FOR NO REASON AT ALL.. .. BEFORE BEING SHOT DEAD BY POLICE ON THE NIGHT OF AUGUST 7TH, 1962
THAT SALLY PARKS.
...WHO, TWENTY-TWO YEARS LATER, HAD A NICE LITTLE JOB TYPING MEMOS FOR BLACKRIVER RECORPORATIONS, INC.
WHY HADN'T SHE ASKED?
WHY HEDN'T SHE ASKED WHAT "RECORPORATIONS" MEANT?
15


WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF THEM? BETTY MONTCLAIR? WAS SHE DEAD, TOO?
ERIC LOVEDAY?
GUS PRITCHETT?
MARK NEWELL?
MATT?
THE SHADOWS OF THE ROOM BEGAN TO SPIRAL AND WHIRLPOOL AND SHE CLUTCHED DESPERATELY AT HER TRAIN OF THOUGHT, A BLACK THREAD IN A BLACKER LANDSCAPE.
MATT. MATT WAS HER HUSBAND.
HE JUST DIDN'T ACT LIKE HER HUSBAND. HE HUNG AROUND WITH DEAD PEOPLE AND PULLED JOBS AND HOUSES OUT OF NOWHERE HE WAS DIFFERENT.
HOW LONG HAD HE BEEN DIFFERENT?
HE'D BEEN DIFFERENT SINCE THE NIGHT OF THE TROUBLE UP AT ELYSIUM LAWNS, THE NIGHT THEY'D ARGUED...
BUT EVEN BEFORE THAT...SINCE THEY WERE IN WEST VIRGINIA, IN FACT...
WHAT HAD HAPPENED IN...
...WEST VIRGINIA?
FROM DEED INSIDE HER, THE BAD THING STARTS TO CRAWL TOWARDS THE LIGHT...
...AND SHE KNOWS.
16
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.


SHE KNOWS WHAT RECORPORATIONS ARE.
SHE KNOWS WHICH BLACK RIVER, MEADING WHERE...
BLACKRIVER RECORPORATIONS
AND WHY THE DEAD BIRD MOVES.
AND WHAT LOOKS OUT FROM BEHIND HER HUSBAND'S EYES.
THE SMELL OF BURNING ALL
HIS NAME SLAMS INTO HER MIND, AND HER KNEES BUCKLE BEFORE ITS AWFUL FORCE.
HIS NAME, A SIGNATURE SCRAWLED IN ACID...
AND SHE THINKS "HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN MARRIED TO...?"
AND SHE THINKS "HOW MANY TIMES DID...?"
AND SHE KNOWS WHAT THE BAD THING IS, AND WHERE THE STENCH IS COMING FROM.

IT'S HER...
...AND SHE CANNOT TEAR THE CONTAMINATION AWAY FROM HER...
...OR BURN IT...
...OR SMOTHER IT WITH PERFUME...
...OR SCRAPE IT FROM HER SKIN...
AND HER DREAMS ARE REEKING, UNBEARABLE THINGS...


...AND HER WAKING IS NO RELIEF.

OH GOD...

CLOTHES...
WHERE DID I PUT... UUEUUGH...
...FIND MY CLOTHES...

GET OUT...
GET OUT GET OUT GET OUT.
GET OUT QUICK...

GET OUT QUICK BEFORE...

19

HELLO, HON.
HOPE YOU DON'T MIND...
... BUT I BROUGHT SOME FRIENDS HOME.
OH... UHHHH...
NO! NO, COME IN!
I, UH, I, UH, OUGHTA GO TO THE STORE... GET SOMETHING FOR DINNER...
OH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT, ABIGAIL.
WE'LL TAKE YOU AS WE FIND YOU.
THAT'S RIGHT.
YOUR WIFE LOOKS NERVOUS, MATTY...
HMM. YES, YOU'RE RIGHT.
WHAT IS IT, AB? WHAT'S THE MATTER, SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND?
I...I KNOW WHO YOU ARE! I...
OH GOD...
LOOK, PLEASE, WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO SAY?
HHUHH...
WHAT DO WE WANT YOU TO SAY?
WELL, THAT'S EASY...
OH NO. NO. NO NO.

CONCLUDED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

HE REACHES OUT TOWARD THE BIRD.
IS IT STILL ALIVE? WHAT CAUSES IT TO WRITHE AND TWITCH...
...IF NOT LIFE?
BUGS!
HE SAW IT MOVE AND THOUGHT IT WAS ALIVE...
...BUT IT WAS FULL OF BUGS!
IT HAD BEEN FULL OF BUGS ALL THE TIME.

NEXT: "A HALO OF FLIES"

EXTRA-SPECIAL BONUS PIN-UP!!
S REISSETTE
TOTLEBEN '81